

Serial No.: 09/337,893

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Art Unit: 1633

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47. (Twice Amended) The method of claim <sup>35</sup>45, wherein the phosphate backbone modification is selected from the group consisting of a phosphorothioate and a phosphorodithioate modification.

Please cancel claims 54-56. ✓

### REMARKS

Claims 42-43 and 45-58 are pending. Claims 54-56 have been canceled. Claims 45-47 have been amended. Support for the amendment is found throughout the application and in particular on at least page 16, lines 8-14, which describe phosphate backbone modifications. No new matter has been added.

### Rejection of Claims 54-56 Under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph

Claims 54-56 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph "as containing subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the art that the inventor(s), at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention."

Applicant has canceled claims 54-56.

### Allowable Subject Matter

Applicant thanks the Examiner for the indication that claims 42, 43, 45-53, and 57-58 are allowable over the prior art of record.

Claims 45-47 have been amended to correct an antecedent basis problem. Claim 45 introduced the concept of the phosphate backbone modification. Originally claim 45 referred to this limitation as "the phosphate backbone modification". Claim 45 was amended to introduce the limitation as "a phosphate backbone modification". Claims 46 and 47 were amended to depend from claim 45 in order to correct the same antecedent basis problem. The amendments to the claims do not narrow the scope of the claims.

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